



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Public Health Committee

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House Bill # 6884, AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION AND CONTROL

The Department of Public Health (DPH) supports House Bill 6884, An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health's Recommendations Regarding Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention and Control. The bill would require local health directors to provide information to parents of children who have been tested positive for high levels of lead on the dangers of lead poisoning, precautions to reduce the risk of lead poisoning and information about potential eligibility for services for children from birth to three years of age.

The bill's language reflects updated medical case management policy established under guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2102, and adopted by the Connecticut Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Screening Advisory Committee in 2013.

The change in federal and state policy occurred based on the latest scientific evidence "...suggesting that the adverse health effects of blood lead levels (BLLs) less than ten micrograms per deciliter (10 µg/dL) in children extend beyond cognitive function to include cardiovascular, immunological, and endocrine effects¹". The Advisory Committee on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention of the CDC recommends that a reference value based on the 97.5th percentile of the National Health And Nutrition Education Survey (NHANES)-generated BLL distribution in children 1-5 years old (currently 5 µg/dL) be used to identify children with elevated BLL. There are approximately 450,000 U.S. children with BLLs above this cut-off value that should trigger lead education, and additional medical monitoring. Intervention at a lower blood lead level ultimately prevents children from becoming severely lead poisoned. This approach had been successful in lowering the rates of lead poisoning state wide.

Thank you for the opportunity to share information related to this bill.

¹ Low Level Lead Exposure Harms Children: A Renewed Call for Primary Prevention Report of the Advisory Committee on Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, January 4, 2012